

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ANNOUNCEMENT OF
PUBLIC MEETING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT FOR A WATER
QUALITY STUDY (TMDL) OF THE MAURY RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES**

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Two meetings will be hosted at two convenient locations within the Maury watershed. The first will be held Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at the Effinger Volunteer Fire Department at 2824 Collierstown Rd., Lexington, VA 24450. This meeting will start with a no-cost community dinner at 6pm (RSVP to Tara Sieber at 540.574.7870 by February 22). The second will be held Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at 7pm at the Natural Bridge Volunteer Fire Department at 5705 S. Lee Highway, Natural Bridge, VA 24578. All meetings are open to the public and all are welcome. In the case of inclement weather, please contact Tara Sieber at (540) 574-7870.

PURPOSE OF NOTICE: The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and its contractors, Virginia Tech's Biological Systems Engineering Department, will present preliminary data for the development of a water quality study known as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs) for the Maury River and its tributaries, including Cedar Creek, North Fork and South Fork Buffalo Creek, the mainstem of Buffalo Creek, and Colliers Creek. This is an opportunity for local residents to share information about the area and its local streams. A public comment period will follow the meetings (2/26/2013 – 4/8/2013).

MEETING DESCRIPTION: Two public meetings will be held to introduce to the local community the water quality improvement process in Virginia, known as the TMDL Process, invite their participation and solicit their contributions, and review the next steps. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia require DEQ to develop TMDLs for pollutants responsible for each impaired water contained in Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY: Several streams in the Maury River watershed do not meet Virginia's water quality standards due to excessive bacteria and have been placed on the 2006, 2008, and 2010 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report as impaired. The bacteria standard preserves the "Primary Contact (recreational or swimming)" designated use for Virginia waterways. Excessive bacteria levels may pose a threat to human health. This water quality study reports on the sources of bacterial contamination and recommends reductions to meet Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the impaired waters. A TMDL is the total amount of a pollutant a water body can contain and still meet water quality standards. To restore water quality, bacterial levels need to be reduced to the TMDL amount. Virginia agencies are working to identify sources of bacterial contamination in the Mary River and its tributaries, including the following waterways:

Stream	County	Length (miles)	Impairment
Colliers Creek	Rockbridge	13.77 mi	Bacteria (E. coli)
North Fork Buffalo Creek	Rockbridge	7.28 mi	
South Fork Buffalo Creek	Rockbridge	13.24 mi	
Buffalo Creek	Rockbridge	15.51 mi	
Maury River	Buena Vista and Rockbridge	12.84 mi	
Cedar Creek	Rockbridge	11.49	

In addition, Colliers Creek does not host a healthy and diverse population of aquatic life, and subsequently was listed as impaired for the “General Benthic (Aquatic life)” water quality standard. This water quality study (TMDL) will review all data collected and determine the cause of the benthic impairment through a weight of evidence approach. Reductions and a TMDL for the cause of the impairment will be developed.

Stream	County	Length (miles)	Impairment
Colliers Creek	Rockbridge	13.77 mi	Aquatic Life

HOW TO COMMENT: The public comment period for these public meetings will end on April 8, 2013. Written comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments and should be sent to:

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